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Eric and Deborah Suder



In 2009, when we created the First Scholars® program, we were driven by a vision to design an innovative program that would dramatically increase the graduation rates of first-generation college students—those who are first in their family to attend college.

For several years prior, we endowed scholarships at The University of Texas at Austin (UT) and West Virginia University (WVU)—helping students with middle-range academic credentials and financial need who wanted to go to college but couldn't afford it. We naively thought that financial assistance alone would assure their success. This was not the case. At that time, only 36% of first-generation ("first-gen") students nationally were graduating. Through our involvement with Student Support Services at WVU, we discovered the distinct challenges first-gen students face, and how important personal support and services are for their success.

Using a business mindset, we reasoned that if we could identify these students' specific challenges, measure, mitigate or even eliminate them, then more students would stay in school and graduate. We've proven this to be true. Our holistic programming offers our Scholars financial support, as well as social, emotional, and personal development.

We designed First Scholars to make an impact at the student, campus, and national levels.

In close partnership with our affiliated universities, we've taken an entrepreneurial and highly engaged approach to our work.

Now entering our ninth year, we're inspired by what First Scholars has achieved to date, grateful for our university partners, and humbled by our many Scholars and the transformational stories they share.

We're proud to have played a part in this program that is changing the way first-gen students are seen and supported. And we're hopeful that others will join us in growing this effort to advance first-gen student success.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Eric and Deborah Suder. Eric's signature is on the left, and Deborah's is on the right.

Eric and Deborah Suder
The Suder Foundation

Our Mission: First-Gen Success

The Suder Foundation dramatically improves the graduation rates of first-gen college students and prepares each scholar for a life with self-awareness, success, and significance. Our highest goals are to engage, empower, and transform lives—and impact the culture of higher education for systemic first-gen student success.

This mission is accomplished through the First Scholars program—a holistic four-year student success program currently operating at a network of four-year public university partners: Kansas State University, Northern Arizona University, University of Kentucky, University of Memphis, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and Washington State University.¹



Why First-Gen?

First-gen students face distinct challenges unlike those of legacy students (those whose parents went to college). Among these challenges, first-gen students:

- represent the greatest cross-section of underserved students nationally
- report greater personal challenges
- begin college less academically prepared²
- have greater financial need and less support
- are more likely to delay college entry, apply to and attend less selective colleges, live off campus, work while in school, and attend school part-time³

Despite these challenges, first-gen students:

- offer universities a means to greater retention and graduation rates
- possess unleashed potential, grit, and character to lead and achieve
- transform generational patterns

First-Gen Students: What Research Says

- ▶ **More than 30% of all current two-and four-year college students nationally are first-gen students.**⁴
- ▶ **Emotional and social intelligence correlates positively with how well first-gen students transition from high school to college.**⁵
- ▶ **Of all first-gen students entering college, only 40% graduate or complete a credential within six years.**⁶

When we started, there were limited programs geared solely toward first-gen students, and most existing student success programs focused primarily on freshman students and academic support.

Our program addresses the challenges common to many first-gen students—to bridge the information gaps, to engage in campus life, to stay in college, and to graduate.

First Scholars was designed in part to prove that:

- **creating a research-based, data-driven program with proven outcomes could inspire institutions to replicate similar programs**
- **developing the innate strengths of first-gen students increases their success and unlocks their potential, both in and beyond college**
- **funding first-gen student success programs retains and graduates more students, providing a powerful moral and practical return on investment—a human and business ROI**

First Scholars was created as a research-based and data-driven model—scalable across a network of four-year, public universities in working partnership with The Suder Foundation—with the goal of becoming self-sustainable by each school. Initially, The Suder Foundation provided \$850 thousand to \$1.5 million for scholarships and program operations to each competitively selected university as a five-year, seed-funding grant to help create and establish the program on its campus. To do this, it was imperative to build buy-in and commitment from top leadership down and to fully institutionalize the program.

To date, The Suder Foundation has invested a total of \$11 million to develop, seed-fund, and pilot First Scholars at eight affiliated universities in our national network. Additionally, our six active university partners have invested more than \$7 million in their First Scholars programs.

Our model requires that each campus form a Strategic Partners Team, representing student affairs, academics, and other stakeholders that impact first-gen success. These teams help integrate and support First Scholars campus programs and cross-pollinate awareness and change.

Our network of affiliated universities interactively partner with our national office. Working together to convene campus representatives from both leadership and operational levels, we have shaped how universities strategize, innovate, and approach first-gen success. This network continually explores how to better navigate the challenges and opportunities for student success in higher education.

BORN FROM A BUSINESS MINDSET

Our Business Mindset

First Scholars was developed and operates from a business mindset. To have a large national impact on the issues facing first-gen students, we developed a scalable model much like a franchise organization—providing comprehensive, proprietary programming, ongoing training, management processes, and evaluation tools.

National Network

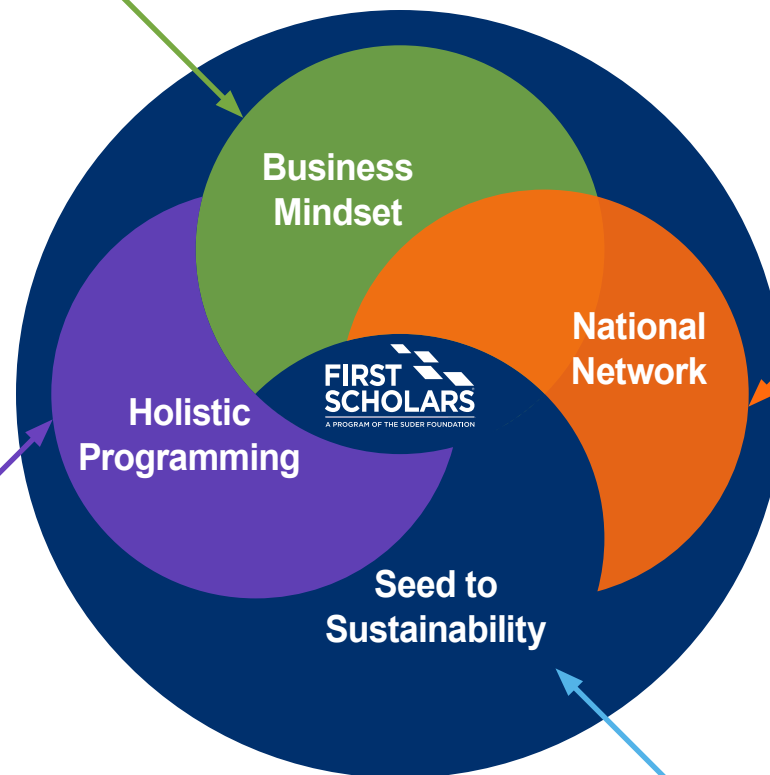
Under the leadership of our national office, in collaboration with our network affiliates, the First Scholars network is making a national impact on first-gen issues. As our results continue to grow, First Scholars is building strong brand recognition, credibility, and loyalty, as well as becoming a highly valued component of our universities' student success initiatives.

Holistic Programming

Our four-year progressive framework employs a wide range of well-researched strategies that bridge the information gaps and the challenges common to most first-gen students. Scholars engage in a comprehensive personal development program that empowers them for success in college and beyond.

Seed to Sustainability

The start-up funding provided by First Scholars allows universities to scale operations gradually, serving a growing number of Scholars each year. As funding responsibility transitions to the university, our national office continues to provide active leadership, management tools, and support to ensure long-term success.



Unlocking First-Gen Potential

The First Scholars program supports first-gen students who have:

- **parents with no more than two years of education beyond high school, and no post-secondary degree**
- **been accepted to one of our four-year affiliated universities**
- **eligibility for in-state tuition**
- **demonstrated financial need as outlined by federal guidelines**
- **scored in the middle range of their school's mean ACT and GPA**
- **scored in the middle range of the Student Strengths Inventory (SSI)**

This intentional selection criteria enables us to accurately compare and validate its data across its network members.

Rather than focusing on merit students, Scholars are selected from mid-range students who score in the mean of their school's ACT and GPA scores.

All applicants take the SSI (Campus Labs, Inc., Student Strengths Inventory™, 2016). The SSI is an instrument guided by more than 30 years of research on the non-cognitive or psycho-social attitudes and behaviors present in successful students. It measures six non-cognitive success factors:

- **academic engagement**
- **academic self-efficacy**
- **campus engagement**
- **educational commitment**
- **resiliency**
- **social comfort**

Again, Scholars are applicants who score mid-range or less on the SSI, ensuring that those awarded will receive the greatest benefit from the holistic focus of the program.



Student Profile: Cherise Wade, Washington State University



“First Scholars gave me the confidence to speak out publicly and ask for support.”

“No one else had gone to school in my family, and navigating the process was extremely challenging. I was determined to do it and make it possible for others in my family to go to college. It was a whirlwind entering school as a freshman, and I wondered: what did I get myself into?”

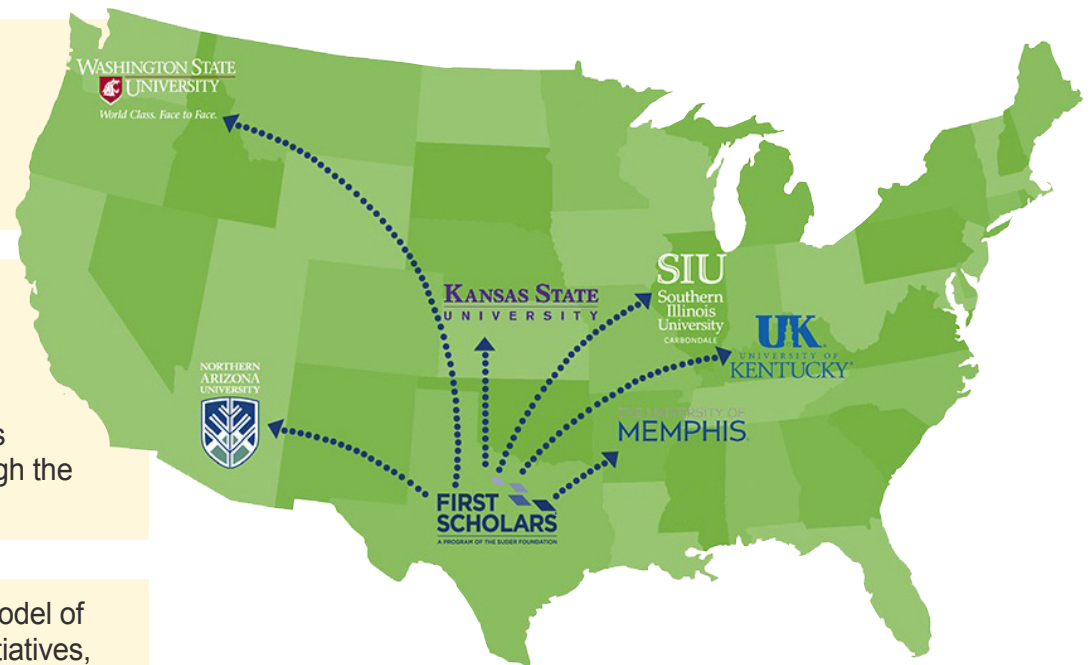
Being part of the First Scholars program, I soon realized I wasn't alone. First Scholars is holistic in its approach, and it gives students like me the full spectrum of support. We had classes and socials every week within our cohort. My program coordinator became my 'mom away from mom' and she helped me create a home on campus. My peer mentor looked out for me, helped me get through my classes, and gave me the resources I needed—academically, socially, and in community service.

I found the networking and connections I created through First Scholars most valuable. I sat on panels and was asked to lead student discussions. First Scholars gave me confidence to speak out publicly and ask for support. Because I had less financial stress during the school year, I was able to afford a study abroad trip to Ghana, West Africa, where I studied and served in an orphanage and elementary school. I graduated a semester early, and I credit that directly to First Scholars.”

How First Scholars Evolved

First Scholars has evolved in strategy and scope over nine years to create impact at three strategic levels—student, campus, and national.

- First Scholars 1.0 – (2009)** Launched the program at two universities to collaboratively develop a “seed-to-sustainability” scalable model focused on **bridging the gaps for first-gen students**. Added six more universities over the next four years.
- First Scholars 2.0 – (2012)** Introduced Steps to Success™, a four-year holistic framework of **strengths-based models for students to build self-awareness, success, and significance**. Teams from our universities were created to develop and pilot First Scholars Strategic Initiatives to scale impact across campuses through the collaborative power of the network.
- First Scholars 3.0 – (2016)** Evolved to a campus-based model of the core program, while continuing to scale the strategic initiatives, including current development of an over-arching, campus-integrated Office of First-Gen Success.
- First Scholars 4.0 – (2017)** Leading and leveraging strategic impact at the campus and national levels through coalitions of leading universities, funders, policymakers, and aligned organizations dedicated to first-gen student success.



Since the program's inception, eight universities have participated in the First Scholars Network, with six currently active: Kansas State University, Northern Arizona University, University of Kentucky, University of Memphis, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and Washington State University.

Student Impact: First Scholars Core Program

Engaging and Empowering Scholars to Lead Transformative Lives



First Scholars provides selected Scholars a \$20,000 four-year scholarship (\$5,000 per year) in addition to comprehensive support that empowers their college experience.

The same objective, data-driven process—based on academic, personal and non-cognitive factors⁷—is used to select, serve, and evaluate Scholars across all affiliated universities, to ensure consistent metrics to support a national model.

Scholars outperform their first-gen peers and legacy students. Through holistic personal development, they build the confidence, strength and strategies to thrive in college and throughout their lives.

“The First Scholars program has been my own personal cheerleader. I could feel hopeless, stressed, nervous or excited, and when I came to my coordinator and peers, I would feel much better. I leave more motivated and determined than when I came in.”

**- Janice M. Cox,
2014 Cohort,
Southern Illinois
University Carbondale**

Student Profile: **Dekitra Durant**, University of Memphis



“I was raised to be a leader, and now because of First Scholars, I am a leader.”

“Being the first one in my family to go to college set the bar high for me. My mom wasn’t able to help me with anything; I did it all on my own. I didn’t know about declaring a major, setting up advising appointments or applying for programs. I thought I had to ‘get it done’ alone. I was wrong. The First Scholars program was there to guide me.

First Scholars gave me the opportunity to live on campus within a cohort of 20 Scholars. This was the best decision I ever made; I wouldn’t have felt I belonged to the school otherwise. Living with other Scholars pushed me and kept me on track. Without the First Scholars program, I likely wouldn’t still be in college.

First-gen Scholars like me are now all over campus, and we’ve assumed leadership positions in student organizations. I was raised to be a leader, and now because of First Scholars, I am a leader. It gave me the necessary skills to be that leader I always knew I could be.”

Campus Impact: Culture of Success for First-Gen Students

Scaling Best Practices

First Scholars serves as a catalyst for campus-wide awareness, strategies, and advancement for all first-gen students—as well as supporting each university's access mission and student-success goals of greater retention and graduation.

In partnership with teams from our network universities, we have and continue to create and pilot strategic initiatives based on best practices from the First Scholars program. These initiatives are scalable, adaptable, and replicable for each campus.



First Scholars Strategic Initiatives

- **Living Learning Community:** Creates a place where first-gen students live, learn, and play together, while supporting each other
- **First-Gen Success Institute:** Offers a series of workshops to address key skills and knowledge for first-gen students to be successful
- **Strengths-based Programming:** Provides workshops and courses using the Gallup StrengthsQuest® assessment and tools help first-gen students understand, build upon, and set goals around their five top strengths
- **Professional Development:** Trains faculty and other higher education professionals to better understand and engage with first-gen students
- **Office of First-Gen Success:** Develops model strategies to support universities in forming a campus-wide, integrated office dedicated to systemic first-gen student success

National Impact: Research, Collaboration, and Leadership

Galvanizing First-Gen Success



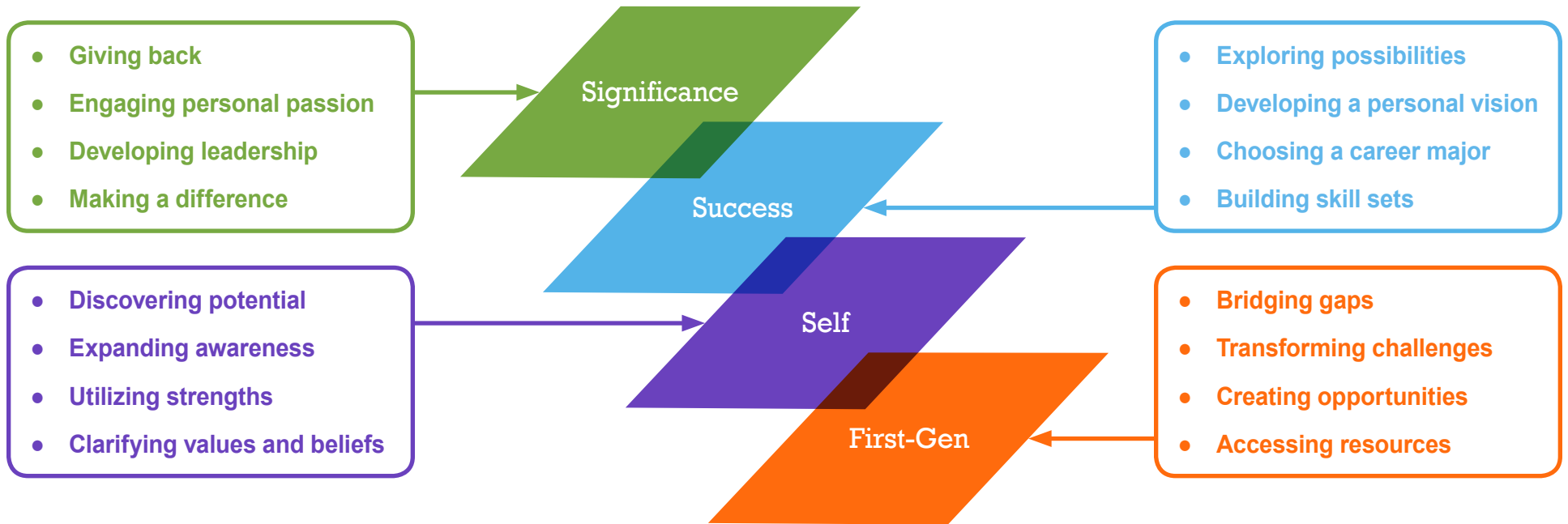
First-gen students are enrolling in colleges at unprecedented rates, and higher education is realizing the need for—and the return on—supporting and expanding student success programs. To attract funding, universities will need to demonstrate success at the outcomes side (retention and graduation) rather than only the input side (recruitment and enrollment). One significant way universities can do this is by focusing on first-gen student success.

The Suder Foundation has accelerated the movement for first-gen success across select campuses, and is now engaged in strategies for greater national impact.

“The Suder Foundation has catalyzed institutional and cultural change at K-State. We’re doing much more to better serve our nearly 7,000 first-generation students, and we’ve learned a great deal about what makes K-State an especially nurturing learning environment. Our first-generation graduation rates are on the rise; we’re committed to maintaining this momentum.”

**- Steven P. Dandaneau, Ph.D.,
Vice Provost for
Undergraduate Studies,
Kansas State University**

Steps to Success: **Four Foundations**



Four-Year Framework



Building a life of self, success, and significance

Program Philosophy: Four Foundations of Success

This program supports Scholars based on four areas of personal development—the Four Foundations of Success.



- **First-Gen Lens:** First-gen students need positive awareness and identity, along with increased support. We help Scholars understand the language of higher education and navigate the college systems.
- **Self-Awareness:** Many first-gen students arrive on campus without concrete perceptions of who they are or what they want from life. Using the Gallup StrengthsQuest® assessment, leadership training, and other strategies, Scholars discover and build on their distinctive strengths. This empowers Scholars to frame their unique self-image and author life choices.
- **Success:** Engaging their strengths, Scholars create their personal vision of success—built on their own dreams and not the expectations of others. This enables Scholars to find their major fields of study much sooner from a purpose-driven perspective.
- **Significance:** As Scholars embrace their strengths, First Scholars guides them to understand their opportunity and responsibility to give back and make a difference.

“As an advisor, I value StrengthsQuest® for its ability to transform the way my students see themselves and for giving them personalized language to describe their natural talents in a way that helps them stand apart from other college students. The strengths survey allows me to assist them with exploring best fits within their academics, extracurricular activities, and relationships.”

**- Eva Navarajo,
First Scholars
Program Director,
Washington State University**

Program Design: Steps to Success™ Framework

While in the program, Scholars gain access to a wide range of support and resources—Steps to Success.

This holistic approach guides Scholars in their journey of personal growth as they transition through college to life beyond. First-gen students experience new challenges at each level of transition and our programming is designed to bridge those gaps progressively.

Steps to Success is built around a four-year framework, each with its own annual development theme:

- **Freshman:** Connect to Campus
- **Sophomore:** Optimize the College Experience
- **Junior:** Expand Career and Community Opportunities
- **Senior:** Transition to the Future

What Students Are Saying

I feel empowered to be the first of my family to graduate.

I gained knowledge, influence, and confidence.

I learned how to network and build important relationships.

I learned to better manage my academics, my time, and my finances.

I feel inspired and encouraged. I now have the tools to succeed.

I overcame the odds and did something my parents never did.

It opened my eyes up to personal development.

I learned how to stand out from others and be a leader.

It taught me to recognize my own strengths and skills.

It was the family I needed—the siblings I never had.

I learned to give back to my community.

Program in Action: Components for Scholar Success

Every First Scholars program has a **full-time Coordinator** who leads the campus program, staff, and cohorts. To support the Steps to Success annual development theme, First Scholars provides Scholars:

1. **Living Learning Community:** Creates an instant peer network through each freshman **cohort of 20 students** living together, giving a sense of belonging—the feeling of “family”
2. **Individualized Guidance:** Provides ongoing support from their Coordinator in both regularly **scheduled sessions and impromptu drop-ins**
3. **Success Planning:** Develop and progressively refine an Individual Strategic Plan that **builds on strengths and sets goals** throughout their college career
4. **Annual Cohort Retreats:** Offers **immersion and bonding** in one- to two-day annual retreats
5. **Cohort Classes and Workshops:** Delivers co-curricular programming designed to build **knowledge and skills** in each respective year
6. **Mentoring:** Assigns to each freshman a **peer mentor**—a First Scholars junior who offers advice, friendship and accountability—and later connected with **faculty, staff and alumni mentors**
7. **Campus Engagement:** Encourages Scholars to join at least one campus organization to **engage with the larger campus community**
8. **Social Engagement:** Plans social, sporting and cultural gatherings both with their **cohort** and with their entire **First Scholars family**
9. **Pay It Forward:** Provides juniors a chance to mentor an incoming Scholar or **serve in other roles**
10. **Community Significance:** Participates in various **volunteer experiences**, both in groups and individually

Scholars learn to know themselves, grow their leadership abilities and strengths, and contribute to their campus and society in a meaningful way.

Evaluating First Scholars Success

The Suder Foundation engaged Career & Educational Consulting Services, LLC (CECS) to develop and manage the performance criteria that would evaluate and ultimately validate the First Scholars program. They also helped design the intentional, data-minded selection criteria as the basis for its proven metrics.

CECS conducts an ongoing evaluation of the program, providing third party, independent review of Scholars' metrics and student performance program-wide in three main areas:

1. Academic progress
2. Academic performance
3. Satisfaction and engagement

CECS compared the data against affiliated universities' first-gen and first-time, full-time student populations. It relied on the actual academic and retention progress data to assess success, while waiting for longer-term data such as graduation rates.

The data reveals that our First Scholars demonstrate significantly higher rates of performance, persistence, and graduation than first-gen and general-student peers.

First Scholars selects mid-range students that score at the mean of their school's ACT and GPA scores, thus assuring a statistical direct comparison to the school's first-gen and general student population. (See more on selection on page 7.)

Success Highlights to Date

The Suder Foundation has:

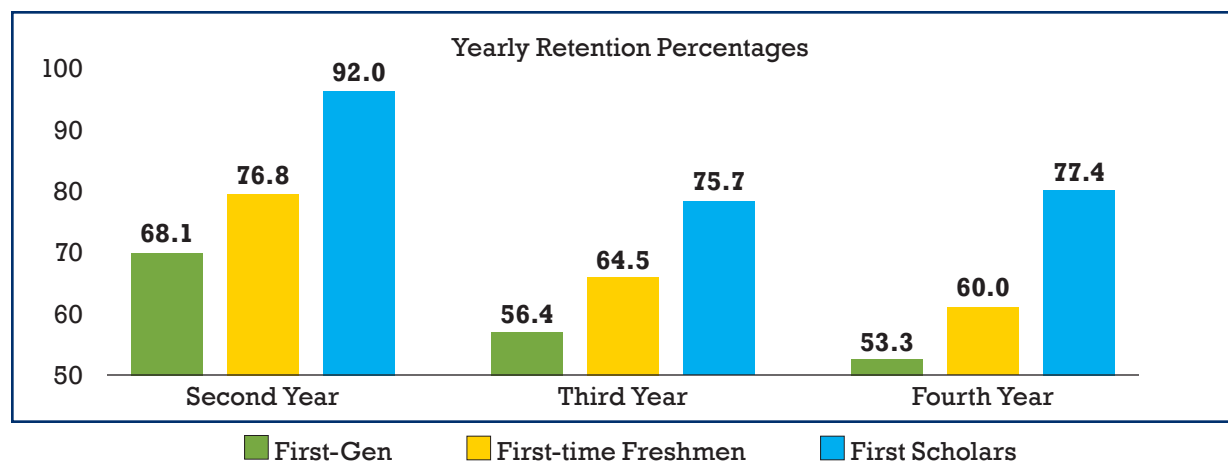
- ▶ **Awarded more than 1,600 annual scholarships of \$5,000 each across its universities**
- ▶ **Served more than 600 Scholars as of Fall 2016**
- ▶ **Served an additional 700 first-gen students and 2,175 faculty, staff and graduate assistants through its Strategic Initiatives**
- ▶ **As of December 2016, graduated 96 Scholars from the initial cohorts completing the four- to six-year start-up period**

What the Numbers Show

Higher Retention Rates

A principal measure of student academic progress is persistence from year to year. If a student is going to drop out of college, he or she is most likely to do so during the period between the first-to-second year.

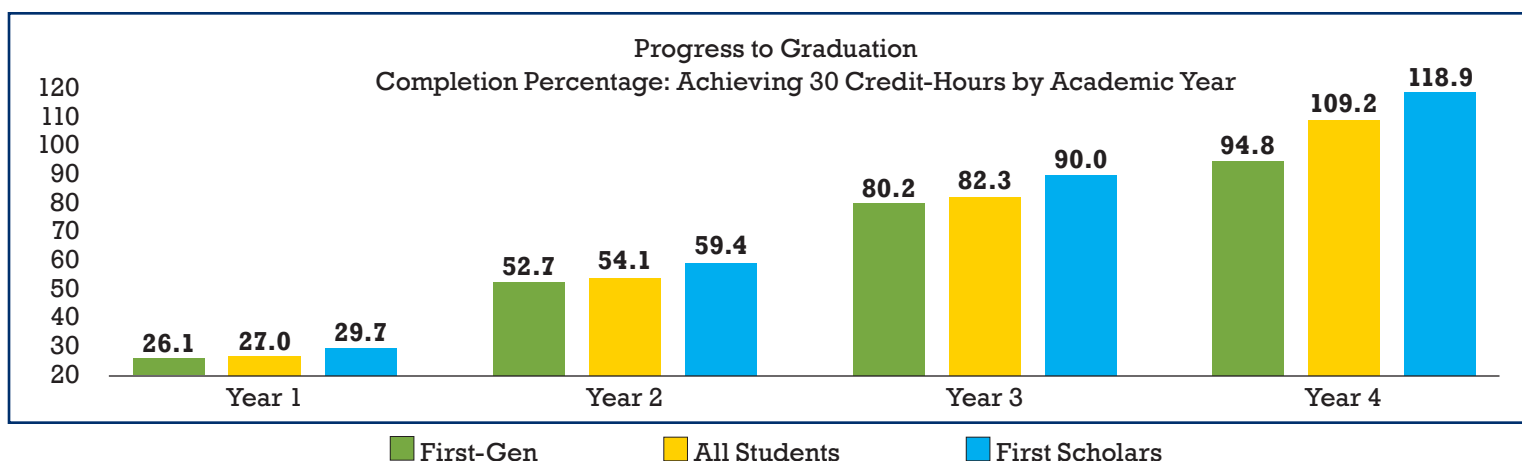
Below are First Scholars retention rates across all affiliated universities and all years. These rates are represented as a percentage of each affiliated university's Scholars compared to institutional averages for first-gen students (not First Scholars) and first-time, full-time students (non-first-gen).



Results: A notable 92% of First Scholars stayed for their second year of study. That compares to an average first-to-second year retention rate of 68% for first-gen students, and 76% for all students across all institutions.

Faster Academic Progress to Graduation

Academic progress to graduation measures a student's commitment and ability to identify and persist in a chosen major. To complete an average academic program (120 credits) in four years, a student must successfully complete an average of 30 credits per year or 15 credits per academic term (semester).



Results: First Scholars significantly outperformed their peers by completing a higher number of credit hours per year, compared to all students and other first-gen students at our affiliated universities and a national survey.^{8,9}

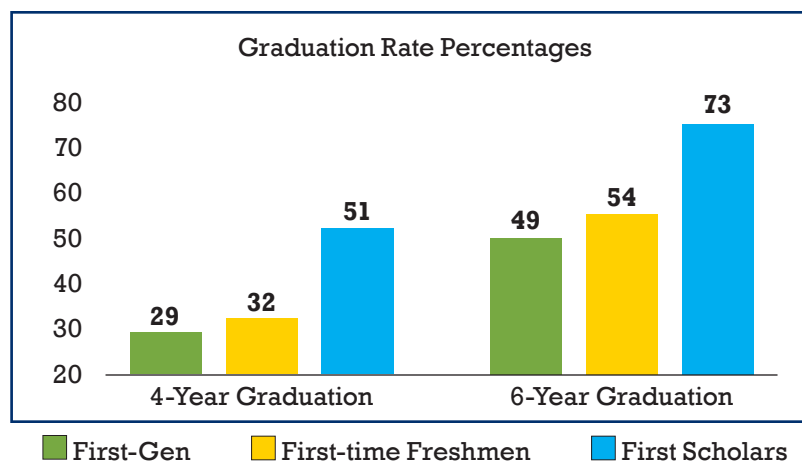
First Scholars complete 29.7 credit hours (99%) in their first year, when average freshmen (non-first-gen) at First Scholars affiliated universities complete 27 credits (90%) and a national sample of first-gen students complete only 26.1 credits (88%).

Four-year totals similarly show First Scholars more successful in completing 118.9 credit hours (99%) by the end of their fourth year, compared to 94.8 credits (79%) for other first-gen students and 109.2 credits (91%) for non-first-gen students in the national sample study.

Higher Graduation Rates

The best measure of students' success is whether they graduate in a timely manner. Typically, four-year institutions focus on their four and six-year graduation rates as metrics of overall success.

The chart below shows the four-year and six-year graduation rates achieved to date at four affiliated universities. It compares First Scholars to the average graduation rates for other first-gen students, and for other first-time, full-time (non-first-gen) students.¹⁰

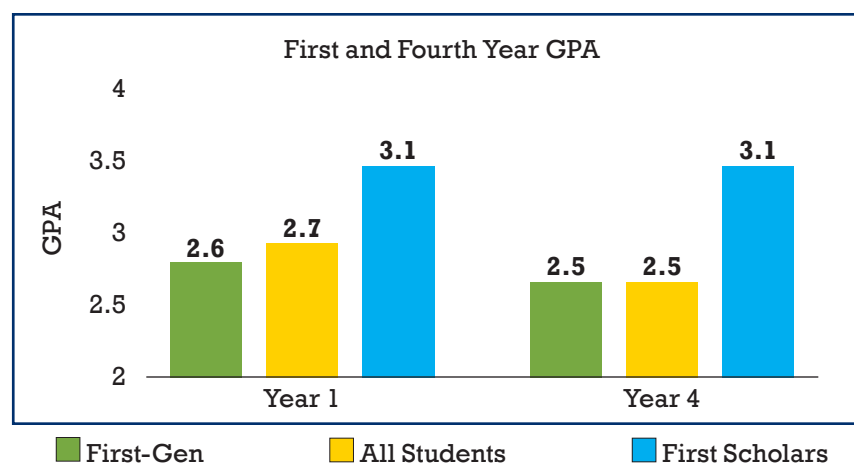


Results: First Scholars' six-year graduation rate 73%, and Scholars graduated in four years at a rate of 51%. This compares to the four-year graduation rates of 29% for first-gen students and 32% for first-time, full-time students across affiliated universities.

As of December 2016, the First Scholars program has graduated 96 Scholars from eligible cohorts.

Stronger Academic Performance

In addition to having higher levels of retention and demonstrating progress towards graduation, Scholars have significantly higher levels of academic performance. This is particularly important since first-year results are also a strong predictor of second fall retention and graduation.



Scholar GPAs averaged 3.1 in their first year across all institutions, while the GPAs of all first-time, full-time students and first-gen students averaged approximately 2.7 and 2.6 respectively. In addition, Scholars continued to outperform their peers over subsequent years with an average GPA that remains consistently higher than a 3.0. This higher academic achievement demonstrated by our Scholars (whose incoming profile is middle-performing students) is an unexpected bonus. **We believe this occurs when first-gen students are given greater holistic support.**

To view First Scholars' student engagement and program component evaluation findings, see our web-only findings addendum at [FirstScholars.org](https://www.firstscholars.org).

First Scholars has served as a living laboratory, one that has allowed us to discover, develop, and prove best practices for first-gen student success.

Student Level

- **First-gen students are unmined gold.** Through our research and our hands-on work with Scholars, we've proven beyond our expectations that these first-gen, mid-range students can and do out-perform legacy students, both academically and as leaders.
- **What works for first-gen students works for everyone.**¹¹ Universities that are looking for innovative ways to help all their students succeed can look to First Scholars components as effective retention and graduation strategies.

Campus Level

- **The First Scholars program amplified awareness and support for first-gen students in a way that universities weren't doing in the past.** When we started First Scholars, most universities did not track or measure vital first-gen students metrics. We required affiliated universities to do so, and now it is standard practice and a valuable tool campus-wide.
- **Our data-driven approach has proven the program's success.** We wanted to show that if we applied best practices consistently, First Scholars can work at any four-year, public state university. We purposely chose our affiliated universities because they were diverse—from various regional and campus cultures, with differing student demographics.
- **One of the most powerful tools we use is convening.** We bring various levels of administration and leadership to work together on the challenges their institutions face.

“First Scholars has given Northern Arizona University the ability to have a greater impact on first-gen student success. We’ve aligned several programs and support services under the umbrella of a First-Generation Programs Office, which helps us better coordinate support for students as well as raise visibility of this student population. We’ve become a first-generation informed campus because of our partnership with The Suder Foundation.”

**- Erin Grisham,
Associate Vice President,
Student Affairs,
Northern Arizona University**

National Level

We've evolved our vision of First Scholars based in part on the following discoveries:

- **Changes in university leadership.** The frequent change of leadership within universities makes it challenging to institutionalize a sustainable program.
- **Shift to access with success.** Performance-based funding with emphasis on retention and graduation rates is creating opportunities for strategic, campus-wide collaboration and innovation.
- **Position as a retention strategy for sustainability.** We realized it was challenging and unusual for a university to take over and sustain a program of this size through the university's development offices alone. It is key to position First Scholars as a retention and graduation tool sustained by institutional funding and leadership support.
- **Vertical silos versus horizontal university mission.** Within large public universities, the college-based, vertical organizational structure can be at odds with horizontal goals and objectives. Our universities have found it challenging at times to bridge these silos in support of First Scholars' over-arching, campus-wide program and initiatives.
- **University concerns with national rankings.** Universities provide less financial support to solid, middle-range students with financial need, favoring high-performing students whose credentials boost rankings.
- **Enrollment growth opportunity.** As many flagship public universities shift their business models to attract out-of-state students, universities with an access mission are expanding their first-gen populations to 30-50% of enrollment.



We hope you take away what our data has proven: that the First Scholars program jump-starts first-gen student success, retains students longer, graduates more of them faster, and prepares them for a life of self-awareness, success, and significance.



As our efforts have taken hold, we've seen a shift in how higher education recognizes first-gen students—not as disadvantaged, but as they truly are: full of depth and potential, and ready to engage the world around them.

We continue our work to plant and elevate first-gen issues and effective programming on campuses nationwide.

We are leveraging our success and entrepreneurial leadership to drive awareness, systemic impact and to inform national policy.

“First Scholars gave me a shot. It gave me the opportunity to go to college, and surpass everyone in my family who never was able to go. Now my kids won’t be first-gen students. I can help them, and things will be different. First Scholars has changed the dynamic of my family for generations to come.”

**- Treven Treece,
University of Memphis**

We hope you will join us.

To learn more about First Scholars or support our efforts, please contact Executive Director Diane Schorr (a former first-gen student herself) at our national First Scholars office. Thank you for sharing in our mission to advance first-gen student success.

Diane Schorr, Executive Director
First Scholars, a Program of The Suder Foundation

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¹ Prior affiliated universities include The University of Alabama (2011–2014) and The University of Utah (2010–2011).

² Choy, S. (2001). Essay: Students whose parents did not go to college: Postsecondary access, persistence, and attainment. In J. Wirt, et al. (Eds). *The condition of education 2001*. U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics: Washington, DC.

³ Engle, J. (2007). Postsecondary access and success for first-generation college students. *American Federation of Teachers*, 3, 25–48.

⁴ Georgetown University Center on Education and the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), 2012.

⁵ Parker, J. D. A., Hogan, M. J., Eastabrook, J. M., Oke, A., & Wood, L. M. (2006) Emotional intelligence and student retention: Predicting the successful transition from high school to university. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 41, 1329–1336.

⁶ Georgetown University Center on Education and the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), 2012.

⁷ The Suder Foundation engaged Career and Educational Consulting Services (CECS) to create a consistent methodology for selecting participants.

⁸ Comparison groups averaged across First Scholar participating institutions.

⁹ We compared the academic progress of First Scholar students to a national benchmark obtained from the Beginning Postsecondary Survey (BPS) conducted by the U.S. Department of Education.

¹⁰ Four of the six First Scholars programs have been operational for a term that permits us to calculate of the four-year graduation rate: Washington State University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, The University of Memphis, and University of Kentucky.

¹¹ Thayer, Paul B. 2000. Retention of Students from First Generation and Low Income Backgrounds (ERIC ED446633). *Opportunity Outlook* (May), 2–8.

